

How to talk like a Situationist



A guide on talking like a Situationist.

1. Learn French. No self-respecting situationist would dream of not knowing it.
2. Always use the most obscure language possible. Get lots of big scholarly words from a dictionary and use them often.
Poor: "Things are bad."
Better: "The formative mechanism of culture amounts to a reification of human activities which fixates the living and models the transmission of experience from one generation to another on the transmission of commodities, a reification which strives to ensure the past's domination over the future."
3. In particular, the words "boredom" (as in "there's nothing they won't do to raise the standard of boredom"), "poverty" (of the university, of art), and "pleasure" are important tools in the young situationist's kit, and use of them will greatly enhance your standing in the situationist community.
4. Make frequent reference to seventy year-old art movements like Dada and Surrealism. Work the subject into your conversations as often as possible, however irrelevant.
5. Vehemently attack "The University" and "Art" whenever possible (phrases like "the scrapheap of Art" or "the stench of Art" are particularly effective). Attend as prestigious a school as possible and make sure your circle of friends contains no less than 55% artists.
6. Cultivate a conceit and self-importance bordering on megalomania. Take credit for spontaneous uprisings in far-flung corners of the world, sneer at those who oppose or disagree with you.
7. Denounce and exclude people often. Keep your group very small and exclusive — but take it for granted that every man, woman, and child in the Western Hemisphere is intimately familiar with your work, even if no more than ten people actually are.
8. Detournement: Cut a comic strip out of the paper (serious strips like 'Terry and the Pirates' and 'Mary Worth' are preferred), and change the dialogue. Use lots of situationist language. What fun!
9. Use Marxian reverse-talk. This is a sure-fire way of alerting people to the fact that you are a situationist or are eager to become one: "the irrationality of the spectacle spectacularises rationality," "separate production as production of the separate."



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10. Invoke "the proletariat," factories, and other blue-collar imagery as often as possible, but do not under any circumstances associate with or work with real proletarians. (Some acceptable situationist jobs are: student, professor, artist.)
11. By all means avoid such repugnant proletarian accoutrements as: novelty baseball hats, rock group T-shirts, 'Garfield' or 'Snoopy' posters (no matter how "political"), and vulgar American cigarettes like 'Kent' or 'Tareyton'.